



The Nutcracker

Goh Ballet's The Nutcracker

A brief history of one of Vancouver's most beloved holiday traditions

Goh Ballet's critically acclaimed presentation of *The Nutcracker* began in 2009 as a way to bring together Vancouver's arts community and create a production that the city could call its own. It has now grown to become a treasured holiday tradition, entertaining tens of thousands who attend the show at The Centre in downtown Vancouver every holiday season.

Since its premiere in 1892, Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* has become one of the world's most recognized and adored ballets. The story follows the journey of young Clara, who is given a Nutcracker doll as a Christmas gift. Clara dreams that her doll comes to life and helps her defeat the evil Mouse King and his menacing mice minions. She then travels with her Nutcracker Prince to the spellbinding Land of Snow and Kingdom of Sweets, witnessing breathtaking magic along the way.

Serving as the creative mind and Executive Producer behind Goh Ballet's rendition of this beloved classic is world-renowned ballerina Chan Hon Goh. Goh spent 20 years as a Principal Dancer with the National Ballet of Canada, during which she performed around the world and received numerous awards. After retiring from the National Ballet, she jumped towards the intersection of arts, business and education, running the Goh Ballet Academy, a prestigious Vancouver dance institute started by her parents Choo Chiat Gah and Lin Yee Goh, themselves former professional ballet dancers. Her first order of business was to create a ballet production unique to Vancouver.

Goh built *The Nutcracker* on the idea of mentorship and community. The ballet brings together more than 200 performers every year, including both aspiring dancers and guest stars from prestigious ballet companies around the world. Young dancers have the chance to work with the best of the best in a professional setting, including dancers from the Pacific Northwest Ballet, the American Ballet Theatre, the New York City Ballet, The Royal Danish Ballet and many others.

The production has also made it a tradition to bring Vancouver's arts community together. Each year, the Vancouver Opera Orchestra provides a riveting live soundtrack, a local choir participates in the Snow Scene, and ballroom dancers perform during the first act. Every facet of the performance features local Canadian talent, from the extraordinary lighting design by Canadian Pierre Lavoie, to the stunning choreography by Mission, B.C. native Anna-Marie Holmes, who is known for her work on productions in Tokyo, London, New York, and more.

After premiering in 2009, the production was met with rave reviews. Georgia Straight called it a "gift to Vancouver" and the Vancouver Sun said it was a "winning formula that should make the production a Christmas tradition for years to come". This prediction proved correct. Over the past seven years, Goh Ballet's *The Nutcracker* has developed into a holiday mainstay, combining innovative touches seamlessly within a traditional framework to create Vancouver's most famous ballet. Each year, elements of the production are refurbished. Certain parts of the dance are revamped to suit the dancers taking centre stage and new artistic collaborations are formed.

Now, Goh Ballet's *The Nutcracker* captures the imaginations of its audience every year, promising a breathtaking live performance that the whole family will enjoy. This year's set of stunning performances takes place from December 17th to 22nd at the Centre (777 Homer Street).

About Goh Ballet:

Since 1978, Vancouver, Canada has been home to the Goh Ballet, a vibrant, innovative and diverse dance organization. Under the direction of Chan Hon Goh since 2010, the organization is following the vision of its founders while expanding on current artistic aspirations. The Goh Ballet pursues technical and artistic excellence while raising cultural awareness in our communities through performance productions. The Goh Ballet is synonymous with excellence, training talent and fostering the presentation of classical ballet. It provides extraordinary opportunities for dancers to reach their full potential, while contributing to the artistic well being of our city and country. The Goh Ballet is always at the forefront of the arts community and has toured around the world, including the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, France and the U.S.A.

For more information on the Goh Ballet's *The Nutcracker*, please visit: www.gohnutcracker.com

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